

NEWS RELEASE

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

Commissioner Claire DeMatteis

Presented by Jason P. Miller, Chief of Communications and Community Relations

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Three Correctional Officers test positive for COVID-19

Dover, DE -- The Delaware Department of Correction (DOC) is announcing that three additional Correctional Officers tested positive today for COVID-19, bringing the total number to 9 Correctional Officers to test positive for the virus.

- **A Correctional Officer who is assigned to Baylor Women's Correctional Institution in New Castle.** The Officer was last at the facility 9 days ago, on Tuesday, March 31. After beginning to experience flu-like symptoms, the Officer began to self-isolate at home, and as symptoms developed the Officer sought medical attention, at which time a COVID-19 test was administered. The positive COVID-19 test result was received by the Officer this morning and verified by the DOC.
- **A Correctional Officer who is assigned to James T. Vaughn Correctional Center in Smyrna.** The Officer was last at the facility briefly on Friday, April 3 before leaving immediately after learning that an immediate family member had tested positive for COVID-19. The Officer began to self-isolate and, as a precaution, obtained a COVID-19 test. The positive COVID-19 test result was received by the Officer this morning and verified by the DOC.
- **A Correctional Officer who is assigned to James T. Vaughn Correctional Center in Smyrna.** The Officer was last at the facility on Saturday, April 4. After beginning to experience flu-like symptoms, the Officer began to self-isolate at home, and as symptoms developed the Officer sought medical attention, at which time a COVID-19 test was administered. The positive COVID-19 test result was received by the Officer this afternoon and verified by the DOC.

No additional information will be provided about the identity of the Officers for privacy protection.

"DOC's screening and prevention protocols are helping us identify, isolate and monitor potential COVID cases early," **Commissioner Claire DeMatteis said.** "These measures, along with our robust quarantine, cleaning, decontamination and treatment efforts, are mitigating the risk to our officers, staff, medical team, and facilities."

Note: The two James T. Vaughn Correctional Center inmates who tested positive for COVID-19 this week continue to be treated in the prison infirmary and are in stable condition.

The DOC is employing a variety of prevention, screening, cleaning and containment measures to guard against the spread of the novel coronavirus, including:

- All persons, including Officers, administrative staff and Probationer, who enter any Probation and Parole Office and any person entering any Level IV violation of probation and work release and Level V prison facility are screened for COVID-19, including a series of questions and a forehead temperature check with a digital thermometer
- Staff who present with symptoms are sent home to self-quarantine and directed to contact their health care provider.
- Newly arriving inmates are held in isolation for the first 14 days, during which they are carefully monitored, including daily temperature checks with a thermometer.
- DOC has implemented extra daily cleaning of DOC facilities and is using specialized fogging machines to disinfect entire rooms of common areas, housing units and workspaces.
- Face masks are being worn by Correctional Officers and contract healthcare workers as a protection for inmates, Officers and other employees. Face masks are also being provided to inmates who are in infirmaries, those with compromised immune systems, and certain inmates with institutional jobs, including food service workers.
- Most Probationer visits with Probation Officers were transitioned to phone check-ins starting last month to support social distancing measures.

In addition, the DOC [has temporarily suspended in-person prison programming to reduce the movement of people into facilities and movement of groups of people within facilities](#). Certain programs, including treatment and education programs and religious programming, are being transitioned to a virtual video format. Inmates continue to have outside recreation opportunities within their confined areas and continue to have access to phones to stay in regular contact with their loved ones. DOC is also expanding the use of electronic tablets among the inmate population, where available.

Get updated information about the DOC's response to COVID-19, read previous announcements of positive COVID-19 cases and review an informational chart of positive COVID-19 cases by DOC facility by [clicking HERE](#) and visiting <https://doc.delaware.gov>, and follow *decorrection* on Facebook and Twitter.

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